

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION  
DEC 20 1869  
WASHINGTON

Cambridge, Mass. Dec. 18. 1869

Dear Grant  
Dec. 18 1869

Dear Prof. Henry D. [unclear]  
Your welcome letter of the 10<sup>th</sup> has  
been before me for a few days, during  
which I have been trying to get a  
moment in which to respond to it.

About the time it reached me we were plunged  
in sorrow by the very sudden death of Mrs.  
Gray's sister-in-law, the wife of her  
elder brother C. W. Lovins; you may  
remember her. She was a great favorite  
and much loved, - had been seriously out  
of health for a few years, but was not  
thought near her end. She died in sleep,  
apparently, without pang or consciousness.  
We attended her funeral yesterday, Mrs. G.  
who had got a good deal worn down  
by sitting the nurse in order, is much  
prostrated by this.

Inward spring I should like to have her  
visit you, and even to do so myself. But  
I shall find it difficult to get away, and  
she probably will not leave me. I wish  
you could come & see us here, - where  
we could have long talks - a thousand  
times more quietly than in W. while  
Congress is in session. I have come

back to very hard college work - a  
tremendously large class - 107, and  
no assistant. The loss of Mann has  
frustrated all my hopes & expectations.  
I had intended my absence to establish him  
in the work, so that the laborious  
detail at least might be hereafter  
taken by him. Now I see no one to  
replace him, - the work has dwindling  
in amount & hardship, and I too old &  
too little patient to do it as well as  
I formerly could. Every two-hour ses-  
sion - 3 days in the week - prostrates me.

However this sort & amount of work  
I will not do after this year. I had  
rather resign - and indeed a sense of what  
is due from me to the College & to the  
Corporation, who have been always kind  
to me - alone restrains me - and live on  
a scanty income, and spare my time for  
the work I am pledged to. If I  
can do so, or throw off, say  $\frac{3}{4}$   
of my work in College & Garden, will  
your Agricult. Department give  
me \$1500 a year while I super-  
intend the Report on Trees. Is it

Which brings me to say - all I  
have time to do to-night - that your  
project of transferring said Report  
to the Agricult. Dept., is most ex-  
cellent, & I think very feasible.

In repaying your outlay, they shall  
only to pay for drawing & engraving,  
for plates & cuts executed. I never  
charged or took a cent for any thing I  
have done.

Dr. Parry, the Botanist of the Agri-  
cult. Department, is a first rate man  
to take this up, - a man I cannot  
work with well, & knows the western re-  
gion thoroughly, is up to trees &c.  
With him should be associated ~~Barby~~  
Barby of Wilmington Del., - whom  
I have been interesting in the subject  
for 2 years or more. He is near by -  
can secure license &c.

Saturday morning. - We will see now if  
I can write plainer by day light.

As to Forest & Forest Trees -

You must (as you said you would like to  
do) write a condensed & plain essay on  
the Climate of N. S. I flourish with:

Forests in their Relation to Climate; the  
Distribution & Character of Forests in the  
world, - in N. America, in particular. -

Then the Development, structure & Physi-  
ology of a tree - of our different sorts  
of trees, - from seedling to fruit. - -  
Then - analysis & particular account and  
figures (more or less) of our species of  
trees in succession - with notices of  
analogous ones of other countries which  
may be worthy of attention here - a  
great part of this may be done by  
Curtis & Parry, one or both. There  
is plan; but, as to time & opportunity,  
"Who is sufficient for these things?"

Ever Yours sincerely

Asa Gray